

Evidence Management Unit Quality Assurance Manual

1 Introduction

The Evidence Management Unit (EMU) is part of the FBI Laboratory Division and has staff in Huntsville and Quantico. EMU personnel are responsible for the receipt, catalogue, and documentation of evidence submitted to the FBI Laboratory. The EMU is also responsible for the photography of evidence items as needed and appropriate. Upon the receipt of evidence, EMU personnel will enter case submission information into the FBI's Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) and perform the appropriate in-processing procedures for each case. EMU personnel will ensure the safety of hazardous items and create an appropriate Examination Plan for submissions managed by the EMU. EMU personnel will also perform the transfers necessary to move evidence throughout the FBI Laboratory. Evidence received, in-processed, and transferred by the EMU will be handled and maintained to best preserve evidence for forensic examinations and technical exploitation.

The EMU maintains the Repository for evidence submitted to the Terrorist Explosive Device Analytical Center (TEDAC) and, upon request, may provide improvised explosive device (IED)-related evidence to TEDAC partners for training and knowledge sharing purposes (see EMU Procedures for the Lending or Destruction of IED-Related Material).

The EMU maintains the TEDAC Case File Room for completed cases and will retrieve case files, as needed, for prosecutorial purposes or as requested by the units/disciplines.

The EMU also coordinates sending shipments of supplies to support all TEDAC units/disciplines, deployed FBI Special Agent Bomb Technicians, and other contributors of TEDAC as needed.

2 Scope

The EMU Quality Assurance Manual (QAM) applies to all EMU personnel. It contains information related to quality assurance (QA), unit organizational structure, roles and responsibilities, personnel qualifications and training, facility security, administrative records retention, nonconformities, safety, and equipment maintenance.

3 Quality Assurance

In addition to the FBI Laboratory QAM and the FBI Laboratory Operations Manual (LOM), EMU personnel will follow all EMU procedures and requirements. Dissemination of information related to Laboratory and EMU QA is accomplished through staff meetings and/or

written and electronic mail communications. The EMU quality system documents are reviewed annually by the Unit Chief and the EMU QA Representative(s).

4 Organizational Structure

Positions and personnel within the EMU are comprised of government employees and, as needed, contract staff. The organization of the EMU is detailed in the unit organizational chart, which is posted on the appropriate FBINet and UET SharePoint sites. The unit organizational chart will be updated to reflect changes in personnel and supervision responsibilities. Job descriptions are maintained by the FBI Laboratory Administrative Unit.

5 Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Supervisory Physical Scientist Unit Chief (UC)

The duties and responsibilities of the UC position include:

- Managing the overall operations of the unit.
- Developing short- and long-term goals and objectives for the unit.
- Directing and coordinating all aspects of work related to evidence handling/processing.
- Providing administrative and evidence handling/processing supervision to employees.
- Developing major aspects of key forensic science program development.
- Planning for future staff, resources, and budget for the unit.
- Ensuring, through direct report supervisors/managers, that staff performance appraisals are completed.
- Managing all contracts and contract staff in the unit.
- Communicating and collaborating with other FBI Laboratory UCs and with personnel from outside organizations.
- Ensuring that FBI Laboratory management is informed of any pertinent evidence-related issues.
- Ensuring all unit procedures and requirements comply with FBI Laboratory QA standards and are followed by unit personnel.
- Ensuring that unit personnel are informed of changes to policies, practices, and procedures that affect the unit.
- Evaluating nonconformities in accordance with the LOM Practices for Addressing a Nonconformity.
- Reporting potential nonconformities to the Quality Manager at the time they are identified when they potentially indicate that the situation or condition is adverse to quality.
- Approving major deviations prior to submission to the Quality Manager.
- Providing 24-hour availability to address national and international crises.

5.2 Supervisory Physical Scientist – Evidence Analyst (SPS-EA)

The duties and responsibilities of the SPS-EA position include:

- Managing the schedule and workload of all EMU evidence staff to ensure efficient and timely completion of work.
- Planning, coordinating, and directing evidence handling/processing to include the overall management of evidence submissions and testimony as required.
- Determining the type and sequence of examinations to be performed on evidence, to include the units that are to be involved.
- Providing authoritative consultation to the contributor(s) and ensuring appropriate responses are sent.
- Profiling cases/link analysis.
- Coordinating major cases.
- Providing administrative and evidence handling/processing supervision to employees.
- Mentoring personnel regarding evidence in-processing procedures, as well as providing guidance to other entities.
- Developing procedures regarding the management of submitted evidence.
- Developing guidelines for accepting or rejecting evidence, which may include expanding or reducing the scope of the requests.
- Providing input into the development and/or update of a LIMS, which may include setting procedures and technical specifications relating to evidence and suggesting functions that should be included in the system(s).
- Developing and/or maintaining systems of internal accounting and control to monitor efficiency.
- Generating metric reports from the LIMS and ensuring their accuracy.
- Reporting potential nonconformities to the UC at the time they are identified.
- Assisting the UC as needed.

5.3 Physical Scientist-Evidence Analyst (PS-EA)

The PS-EA position may be referred to as evidence management personnel. A PS-EA's duties and responsibilities may include the following based on employee level:

- Managing a large number of incoming cases, which may include major cases.
- Managing all administrative aspects of a case from receipt to close out (Note: more independence in this process is expected with higher grade levels).
- Reviewing and evaluating incoming submissions to determine the nature and extent of examinations requested.
- Ensuring that the priority/category assigned to a case is accurate and, if needed, making the appropriate changes to its status.
- Ensuring that the inventory of submitted evidence is conducted and recorded appropriately and that evidence is itemized accurately.

- Having substantial knowledge and understanding of all types of forensic examinations conducted by the FBI Laboratory.
- Providing advice to contributors on FBI Laboratory capabilities and the collection, preservation, and submission of evidence.
- Determining the Examination Plan based on the evidence received, the request, and the capabilities of the FBI Laboratory.
- Assigning appropriate units/disciplines to conduct necessary examinations.
- Ensuring that the sequence of examinations will preserve the integrity of the evidence.
- Contacting the contributor to verify receipt of the evidence, discuss the case, resolve issues or discrepancies, and finalize the Examination Plan when applicable.
- Recommending additional examinations, as applicable, to include other FBI Divisions or other government agencies (OGAs).
- Serving as the centralized point of contact between the contributor and the FBI Laboratory by handling the majority of the inquiries from the contributor, providing updates regarding the status of a submission, and, when appropriate, initiating contact between the contributor and the Forensic Examiner(s).
- Monitoring data pertaining to Chain-of-Custody issues, evidence type, examination type, and efficiency of case turnaround times as needed.
- Tracking all assigned cases throughout the examination process and updating cases to maintain accurate information.
- Overseeing the transfer of evidence to units/disciplines for examination.
- Mentoring personnel regarding evidence in-processing procedures, as well as providing guidance to other entities.
- Assisting in the development of procedures regarding the management of evidence.
- Maintaining and updating relevant databases.
- Liaising with external contributors and/or OGAs to stay abreast of new innovations, which may assist in the examination of evidence.
- Reporting potential nonconformities to the Supervisor(s) and/or UC at the time they are identified.

5.4 Explosives Safety Specialist (ESS)

The duties and responsibilities of the ESS position include:

- Performing explosives safety work and assisting with the management of the forensic science explosives program.
- Performing independent complex and hazardous duties associated with the use, storage, transportation, handling, and packaging of explosives.
- Managing the risk of handling ammunition and explosives and ensuring compliance with the appropriate explosives safety policies and regulations.
- Maintaining a current working knowledge of all FBI and Department of Defense policies and procedures for the detonation of explosives.

- Maintaining accurate records of explosives inventory and preparing all bunkers, storage areas, and inventory logs for safety inspections.
- Maintaining all equipment used in conjunction with explosive operations and storage.
- Ensuring the proper and safe transport of explosive materials.
- Ensuring physical evidence is properly handled and recorded, to include receipt, retention, and disposition of the evidence.
- Receiving and inventorying submitted evidence as needed.
- Ensuring evidence is safe to handle throughout the FBI Laboratory and recording this verification of safety in the case notes for the appropriate cases.
- X-raying evidence, if needed, and preparing notes regarding the x-ray results by indicating measurements and exact location of explosive materials within the device as appropriate.
- Planning and preparing basic explosives trainings, as needed, and ensuring the immediate, safe, and effective use of explosives.
- Communicating with internal and external participants at all levels during explosive operations and training related to the explosives safety program.
- Preparing written reports related to the detonation of explosives at operational or training events and ensuring that all regulations were followed and recorded.
- Assisting other FBI entities in explosives courses, as needed, by supporting operations, preparing mock devices, and providing logistical support.
- Reporting potential nonconformities to the Supervisor(s) and/or UC at the time they are identified.

5.5 Supervisory Photographer (Forensic)

The duties and responsibilities of the Supervisory Photographer (Forensic) position include:

- Managing the schedule and workload of all EMU photography staff to ensure efficient and timely completion of work.
- Collecting monthly photography metrics/statistics for assessing work efficiency and quality.
- Managing a caseload of multiple and varied assignments, independently evaluating and prioritizing casework to meet changing deadlines, and producing results that meet or exceed standards for quality, quantity, and timeliness.
- Using the necessary photographic workstations, software programs, and software digital image capturing systems to perform photographic operations for TEDAC.
- Routinely operating and maintaining a full range of standard and specialized photographic equipment.
- Ensuring that photographic equipment is maintained and that supplies are ordered and stocked to ensure the continuity of operations.

- Serving as a Subject Matter Expert (SME) in the development and application of photographic technologies in the field of latent print photography.
- Evaluating evidence independently and applying complex forensic lighting theory and photographic techniques to enhance latent impressions.
- Performing reproduction and enhancement of fingerprint cards and transparent lifts using accepted digital imaging procedures.
- Providing thorough and accurate records of evidence movement through the proper Chain-of-Custody.
- Providing adequate, detailed, and complete records of the methods and procedures used in digital imaging enhancement.
- Reporting potential nonconformities to the UC at the time they are identified.
- Assisting the UC as needed.

5.6 Photographer (Forensic)

The duties and responsibilities of the Photographer (Forensic) position include:

- Managing a caseload of multiple and varied assignments, independently evaluating and prioritizing casework to meet changing deadlines, and producing results that meet or exceed standards for quality, quantity, and timeliness.
- Using the necessary photographic workstations, software programs, and software digital image capturing systems to perform photographic operations for TEDAC.
- Routinely operating and maintaining a full range of standard and specialized photographic equipment.
- Ensuring that photographic equipment is maintained and that supplies are ordered and stocked to ensure the continuity of operations.
- Serving as a SME in the development and application of photographic technologies in the field of latent print photography.
- Producing and preserving images on a variety of subjects in both the laboratory and field operation setting.
- Evaluating evidence independently and applying complex forensic lighting theory and photographic techniques to enhance latent impressions.
- Performing reproduction and enhancement of fingerprint cards and transparent lifts using accepted digital imaging procedures.
- Providing thorough and accurate records of evidence movement through the proper Chain-of-Custody.
- Providing adequate, detailed, and complete records of the methods and procedures used in digital imaging enhancement.
- Reporting potential nonconformities to the Supervisor(s) and/or UC at the time they are identified.

5.7 Evidence Control Technician (ECT)

The duties and responsibilities of the ECT position include:

- Handling physical evidence and generating records in a highly accountable way.
- Tracking evidence using the appropriate LIMS and ensuring accuracy of all material submitted for investigative, intelligence, and court purposes.
- Providing guidance to Forensic Examiners, other FBI personnel, and contributors regarding the proper securing, storage, packaging, transportation, and shipping of evidence.
- Demonstrating knowledge of the FBI policies regarding evidence packaging, maintenance, and storage, and providing these policies to other agencies as needed.
- Assisting with the shipping/receiving of hazardous materials.
- Receiving evidence and inventorying evidence as needed.
- Performing duties in support of the operations and functions of the unit as deemed necessary by the UC and supervisory personnel.
- Reporting potential nonconformities to the Supervisor(s) and/or UC at the time they are identified.

5.8 Logistics Management Specialist (LMS)

The duties and responsibilities of the LMS position include:

- Demonstrating responsibility for the status and location of non-expendable equipment.
- Conducting periodic inventory and reconciling balances of on-hand equipment and supplies.
- Establishing and/or utilizing existing databases, as needed, for tracking and updating inventory and preparing reports.
- Processing requests for the procurement of new equipment and supplies.
- Assisting unit personnel in researching availability of new equipment through trade magazines or trade shows.
- Soliciting information from commercial vendors on new equipment and/or technology.
- Ensuring adequate on-hand stock of expendable unit supplies by providing updates to inventories and submitting requests/purchase orders when on-hand stock falls below operating levels.
- Ensuring service contracts and warranties on capital equipment are initiated, as needed, and renewing service contracts and warranties when expired.
- Identifying equipment that is obsolete, outdated, or excess through periodic survey.
- Monitoring all equipment that has an active shelf-life.
- Preparing required records for the disposal or surplus of equipment and forwarding those records to the Administrative Unit for appropriate action.

- Establishing and filing equipment-supporting records such as inventory records, property receipts, etc.
- Using necessary equipment such as forklifts, scissor lifts, etc., for warehouse or shipping/receiving operations.
- Assisting with the shipping/receiving of hazardous materials as needed.

5.9 Case File Assistant

The duties and responsibilities of the Case File Assistant position include:

- Serving as a records management liaison with FBI Headquarters (FBIHQ) to ensure that all records comply with federal records management regulations and FBI records management policies and procedures.
- Authorizing and overseeing all records management functions delegated by FBIHQ.
- Acting as an advisor on the entry of data into case management systems through the review and analysis of documents.
- Serving as a liaison with appropriate FBIHQ entities and outside sources for the purpose of collecting data required for completing work and implementing solutions.
- Performing the full range of administrative case file preparation functions for the unit.
- Ensuring that administrative case files are serialized, tracked, and maintained in the file room.
- Receiving requests from the forensic units/disciplines to have FBI case files retrieved from the TEDAC file room and ensuring they are properly signed out to the individual.
- Participating in records inventory studies and making recommendations concerning records storage and maintenance.
- Conducting periodic audits consistent with compliance audits performed during inspections.

5.10 Management and Program Analyst (MAPA)

The duties and responsibilities of the MAPA position include:

- Performing a variety of highly complex management/program functions, to include serving as an advisor and senior consultant on topics such as Human Resources, operations, programs, budget, and resourcing.
- Performing tasks in Sentinel such as closing leads, setting leads, following up on evidence submissions from other FBI entities, and resolving discrepancies in submissions.
- Preparing project plans and budget documents needed for operations.
- Performing analysis of projects, plans, and operations to help improve efficiency and effectiveness.

- Defining the overall scope of analysis and evaluation to be conducted and ensuring measures are taken to record effectiveness and accuracy.
- Researching past performance of various programs to develop spending allocations, monitor/control related expenses, and to forecast trends.
- Developing budget estimates and justifications, which can include ensuring funds are used in accordance with the operating budget, recommending transfers or reallocation of funding based on rates of expenditure, and comparing current and historical information regarding resource allocations to identify trends.
- Performing highly complex cost analysis to include comparing the appreciation, financial plan execution, and actual expenditures.
- Preparing statements of work, directing contractor activities, ensuring contract deliverables are met, and advising management on contract progress.
- Assisting the UC as needed.

6 Personnel Qualifications and Training

6.1 Qualifications

6.1.1 Personnel in the SPS-EA and PS-EA positions must meet the requirements, including education, specified in the individual occupational requirements of the Office of Personnel Management General Schedule Qualification Standards for their position.

6.1.2 Personnel in the ESS position must meet the requirements, including education, specified in the individual occupational requirements of the Office of Personnel Management General Schedule Qualification Standards for their position.

6.2 Training

6.2.1 EMU will administer and maintain the *FBI Laboratory Evidence Management Unit Training Manual* for the SPS-EA, PS-EA, ESS and ECT positions. This training manual details the EMU Training Program and identifies the requirements necessary for achieving qualification and authorization to perform the duties associated with these positions.

6.2.1.1 EMU will ensure that the ECT and other applicable unit personnel attend the required hazardous materials shipping training.

6.2.2 EMU will administer a Photography Training Program and maintain the associated training manual for the Supervisory Photographer (Forensic) and Photographer (Forensic) positions. The Photography Training Program identifies the requirements necessary for achieving qualification and authorization to perform the duties associated with these positions.

6.2.3 A qualification and authorization Electronic Communication (EC) will be prepared in accordance with the FBI QAM for all SPS-EA, PS-EA, ESS, ECT, Supervisory Photographer

(Forensic), and Photographer (Forensic) personnel who successfully complete the required training program.

6.2.4 For refresher training, the applicable Training Manual will be completed in its entirety or in specified sections as determined by the UC and Training Coordinator(s).

6.2.5 All personnel assigned to the EMU are required to complete a minimum of eight (8) hours of continuing education (CE) each fiscal year.

6.2.5.1 CE should focus on maintaining or enhancing the skills and expertise of the employee and should be consistent with his/her performance plan. Employees are encouraged to seek out relevant CE opportunities; however, all elective CE must be approved by the employee's Supervisor and the UC.

6.2.5.2 EMU personnel may satisfy the CE requirement through a variety of traditional and non-traditional learning opportunities, which can include:

- Internal unit/section/division trainings or instruction
- Training conferences
- Professional development classes/workshops
- Computer-based learning
- Academic courses

6.2.5.3 EMU personnel may evaluate any elective CE event by either providing written assessment to his/her Supervisor or verbal assessment at a unit meeting.

6.2.5.4 Each EMU employee will ensure that all CE training records are entered into Virtual Academy, the FBI's official record keeping system for training records.

7 Facility Security

7.1 Laboratory space is separated from office space. No food, drink, gum, or tobacco products are allowed in laboratory space without prior written approval from the Health and Safety Group.

7.2 The FBI Laboratory buildings and all other associated buildings are secure. These buildings require Security Access Control System (SACS) badge access. Evidence Storage Rooms (ESR) have additional security controls in that they require SACS badge access and alarm activation/deactivation. ESRs may also require Hirsch Pad PIN entry and/or X-09 (or equivalent) combination locks. During normal working hours, the alarm activation and/or X-09 (or equivalent) lock may remain inactive. At the end of the day, all necessary security measures will be followed.

7.2.1 If loss of power or electricity were to occur, backup generators would restore power to the SACS badge readers. However, if backup power fails, the FBI Laboratory Security Group

maintains control of all physical keys to rooms in the Laboratory building and other associated buildings.

7.3 The Intake Center and the high bay area of the Repository are designated as closed secret storage. In these areas, hard drives must be removed from classified computer systems at the end of each workday and stored in a safe or secure area that is designated as open secret storage.

8 Records and Retention

A list of EMU records that will be retained in the case file include:

- Incoming communications from the contributor regarding the submission (e.g., ECs, Laboratory Examination Requests, letters, spreadsheets, storyboards, TEDAC Item Submission Form (7-275), or TEDAC Bulk Submission Form (7-276))
- Check-In Notes/Photo Check-In Form
- FBI Laboratory Examination Plan (7-262) and/or TEDAC Examination Plan (7-274) as appropriate
- Records of damage to shipping containers
- Pertinent emails to the contributor/stakeholder, such as an acknowledgment email
- Activity and Communication Log (7-245) or Case Communication Log
- Chain-of-Custody Log (7-243 or 7-243a), or Forensic Advantage or Explosive Reference Tool equivalent
- Case Report/Case Record Report
- Laboratory Report (7-273) for cancelled exam requests or a no examination email to the contributor if applicable
- *Checklist for Creation of EMU IA Packets – Legacy Cases* (Appendix A) as appropriate

9 Nonconformities

9.1 EMU will follow the LOM Practices for Addressing a Nonconformity when a potential nonconformity is identified.

9.2 A nonconformity may be handled as a concession, correction, or a corrective action.

9.3 EMU personnel will notify the Supervisor(s) and/or UC of all situations and conditions for which a concession, correction, or corrective action may be necessary.

10 Safety

10.1 Health and safety policies and procedures for the FBI Laboratory are established by the FBI Laboratory Health and Safety Group. The EMU has designated Health and Safety Representative(s).

10.2 All EMU operations will be performed in a safe manner and in accordance with the standards established by applicable regulatory practices. EMU personnel will follow the health and safety practices and procedures outlined in the FBI Laboratory QAM and FBI Laboratory Safety Manual.

11 Equipment Maintenance

11.1 None of the equipment utilized by the EMU is used to perform examinations or analysis; therefore, EMU equipment does not affect forensic examinations or testing.

11.1.1 Balances and safety hoods are calibrated annually as a best practice.

11.1.2 X-ray equipment is not calibrated unless it is relocated. Personnel who utilize the x-ray equipment undergo training to be able to interpret x-rays.

11.1.3 Digital imaging equipment is serviced in accordance with maintenance agreements and/or as needed.

11.2 Any equipment found to not be functioning properly will be removed from service and a notification will be placed on the item. A record of maintenance will be retained upon completion of servicing.

12 References

Evidence Management Unit Procedures Manual, Procedures for the Lending or Destruction of IED-Related Material, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

Evidence Management Unit Quality Assurance Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

FBI Laboratory Evidence Management Unit Training Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

FBI Laboratory Operations Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

FBI Laboratory Quality Assurance Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

FBI Laboratory Safety Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division, latest revision.

General Schedule Qualification Standards, Office of Personnel Management, latest revision.

ISO/IEC 10725 – General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories, International Organization for Standardization, Geneva, Switzerland, 2017.

ISO/IEC 17025:2017 – Forensic Science Testing and Calibration Laboratories Accreditation Requirements (AR 3125), ANAB, Milwaukee, WI, April 29, 2019.

Rev. #	Issue Date	History
2	10/15/2020	Updated checklist in Appendix A.
3	04/15/2021	Minor updates throughout document for clarity. Added reference to no examination emails to the contributor in Section 8; Added Section 11 to address equipment maintenance.

Approval

Redact - Signatures on File

Evidence Management
Unit Chief

Date: 04/14/2021

QA Approval

Quality Manager

Date: 04/14/2021

Appendix A: *Checklist for Creation of EMU 1A Packets – Legacy Cases*

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